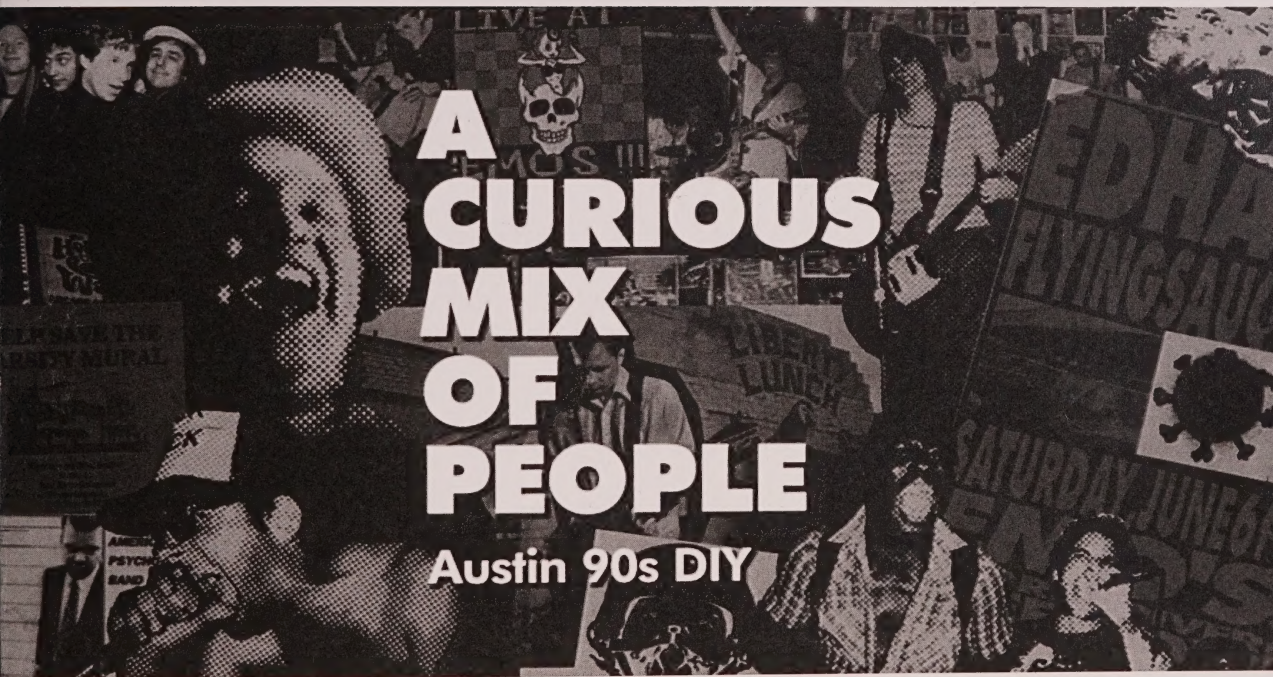
a curious mix of people

Vol. 11

Meat Joy re-unite with gigs around Austin
Legendary bar Chances
Photographer Lisa Davis
Swine King
Power Snatch
Garnet



Meat Joy ... Cheer Up Charlies ... Kerthy Fix ... Chances... Gretchen Phillips ... Lisa Davis... Cavity ... Lesbian Avengers .. ... Power Snatch... Electric Lounge... Punk Rock Prom ... Swine King Chess Club ... Sincola ... Girls Rock Camp ... OutYouth ... Terri Lord ... Biscuit ... Blue Flamingo... DIY ... Hamell on Trial

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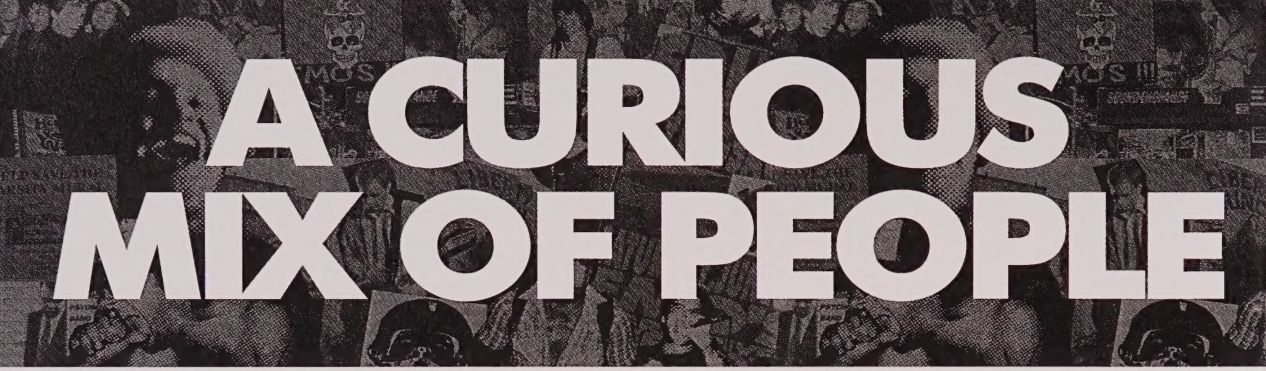

What is this?
For about ten years (seriously), we've been interviewing people who were integral to Austin's DIY music scene in the '90s. As well as the bands, there were poster artists, zine publishers, radio DJs, photographers, record stores and venues.

But why Austin?
"Austin's always had this homegrown, freaky, weird scene of people playing the music, but just taking this a notch further ... just doing something a little bit stranger, something a little weirder. I think it's been in Austin's DNA from, at least, the 60s. It probably goes back to the 1860s for all I know. I think it's why we're all attracted to Austin - because we love the city. We love its freaky nature. We love its creativity and its generosity. I think that's been a key scene to the music for decades now."
~ **King Coffey.**

POINT YOUR PHONE CAMERA AT THIS THING!

It gets you to our website - videos, photos, old zines and all that good stuff.

Cover Art Collage:	Chepo Peña
Interviews:	Chepo Peña, Greg Beets and Richard Whymark
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Meat Joy re-unite!

From Gretchen Phillips :

Before Two Nice Girls, before Girls in the Nose, there was Meat Joy.

We were formed in 1982. Austin rents were cheap. Reagan was president. The Big Boys and The Dicks were the kings of the scene, inspiring us one show after another. The punk scene was relatively small and pretty damn inclusive. We were young, curious, brave, and willing to try pretty much anything.

Initially we were me and Teresa Taylor and Mellissa (Cobb) DeMille, as well as school chums Tim Mateer and John (Perkins) Hawkes. We sort of knew what we were doing. And we also really had no fucking idea but were happy to experiment. Things progressed, Teresa left and Jamie Spidle joined. We played at the illustrious Nite Life with Jamie and somehow that gig really kicked us off into high gear. We got into this 8-track recording studio on South Lamar, ESR Studios, and recorded one song for Jeff Smith's compilation Metal Moo Cow....(Jeff, I will always be eternally grateful to you!) and found that we liked being in the studio so much we wanted to make an entire album.

In a way, we were so democratic we had a hard time deciding on one thing. We went around and around about how we wanted the albums to look and in the end we decided we wanted the community to help us create the covers. We would have record decorating parties. We would hand blank covers to industrious folks who wanted to work on the project of making a lot of them.... (I'm looking at you, Darcee Douglas). We would add art to covers already completed. We would title the album whatever we felt like. We made 1500 of them in this fashion.

In 1984 the albums would cost you $5 each. A t-shirt would also cost you a scant $5. That was then, this is now.

We broke up a scant 9 months after that album came out. The album went on to become a bit of a collector's item, fetching a pretty penny on eBay and Discogs, etc. Some fans felt obliged to put songs or sides of the album up on YouTube because it was so long out of print. I have mixed feelings about that.

Meanwhile the members of Meat Joy did a ton of stuff that didn't include each other, but we never stopped loving each other.

A miracle occurred in February of 2022. We all started having a regular Sunday afternoon FaceTime meeting from our now far-flung home towns. We started to get to know each other as adults, the adults we are now as compared to the barely past our teens we were back then. We decided to re-issue the album. We had it re-mastered. We had art work re-done and re-vamped (thank you, Dave Driver). We scanned all of our photos and our posters and digitized all of the still amazingly audible cheap-ass Radio Shack cassettes we would record our jams and our shows on. We dared to dream of live shows and getting to play these wonderful songs again. Now is the time.

AUSTIN DIY SCENE & PERFORMANCE ART

JAMIE: In Austin, there was definitely fanzines and punk zines, so a lot of people made their own magazines.

TIM: With The Big Boys and The Dicks there was costuming going on, which was encouraged. Gretchen and John and I had been doing dance pieces, so there was a willingness to do that. I also think of some of the shit that went down in Voltaire's. David Yow on the cross as Jesus Christ singing, "I Don't Know How To Love Him." So there was always a performance thing happening.

JOHN: Sorry, Tim. As a fact checker, I would say that - although it's better as you have it - David Yow was singing "Damned For All Time" from the cross from *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Only because I have a recording of it...

CURIOUS MIX: You mentioned The Big Boys and The Dicks but also a little later there was Moist Fist and Ed Hall and bands like that. This just seemed to be an organic thing in Austin where, even if it was a Tuesday night, everyone brought the best performance that they could.

TIM: I believe that was special to the scene. I tell people all the time that this cross-cultural thing that was happening, coming out of UT - really smart people in the film department, the Brian Hansens of the world - it was just bubbling all around us.

GRETCHEN: I thought that all punk scenes were very queer. I played at a really cool queer festival in Atlanta and my buddy was like, "You're lucky that your punk scene is queer because I promise you, my punk scene was not queer and was actually homophobic." But the Lisa Davises and Power Snatch is the continuum. Susannah from Moist Fist was in bands playing on the bill with us back in the day. So I would say that one thing that's specific to Austin is the queerness. And not just the fags, but the dykeness, too.

JOHN: What was unique about Austin's queer scene is that it was in Texas in the early eighties that made it a pitched and heightened thing as well. I imagine it was dangerous for a lot of gay people who were punk rockers in Texas. And that probably was dangerous everywhere. But I just feel like Texas at that time was a hard place to be queer.

JAMIE: You're right, John. But Austin has always been the city in Texas that was - at that time - the most open-minded and where you could go and be more yourself or explore things that maybe you couldn't in other towns or cities.

FORMING THE BAND

MELLISSA: Well, Austin was kind of like a river delta, right where you meet each other in different places. I knew Teresa before any of the rest of them, though she and I were hanging out early in the in the punk scene. One of the things that I remember us doing for sure is that we went to Prince's *1999* concert. Then when she and Gretchen started going out, she introduced me. We all moved into a rental house together, and we started playing together along with Edith Frost, who is now successful in Chicago.

We had a little band called The Suffer Jets. And then I had a band called Stick Figures. Jim Fritzler, who played keyboards and squeaky duck in Stick Figures, was a director and he directed Tim and John in plays. So I met Tim and John through him. I saw Tim skating up in his boot skates in boxer shorts - they looked like underwear to me. And I just thought he was so intriguing that I had to start chatting him up. So that's my version of how I met everybody. And then Gretchen and Teresa moved into the warehouse at some point where the Buffalo Gals were.

And I was a big Buffalo Gal fan myself, and Jamie was the drummer for the Buffalo Gals. But Teresa was poached by the Butthole Surfers and the Buffalo Gals broke up. And so we got to have Jamie as our drummer.

JAMIE: I joined when Teresa left. Teresa and Gretchen lived in this downtown warehouse space. Me and my two bandmates in Buffalo Gals, Liz [Gall] and Kathy [McCarthy], rented it out so we could have this really cheap live/work space.

And then Gretchen and Teresa ended up moving there, too. There was a little platform, and they had hung up some curtains. And that was the room. Everyone else's room was just kind of structured out of plywood. And there was this larger room which became our practice space.

So it all just kind of came together that way.

MEAT JOY

TIM: From the beginning, the jam sessions were fully organic.

Mellissa had started a student organization called *Iconoclast* and we had come together at the Suffer Jet House - Suffer Jet City - to put together magazines as a group. And the girls had equipment set up. They were already playing. "Let's have a jam session!" I just was personally overjoyed because I'd never imagined being in a band. And suddenly I was getting to play along. And this thing grew and relationships developed and it became a really interesting family.

We put out the magazine, we rehearsed plays, we produced plays by local playwrights. This is part of Iconoclast, which Meat Joy grew out of.

WHERE DID THE NAME COME FROM??

MELLISSA: I was a stocker at the University Co-op book store. Somebody had some assigned textbook that had stuff from Carolee Schneemann in there for Meat Joy and I was like, "Yeah. This is us." And and to top it off, we were all vegetarians at the time.

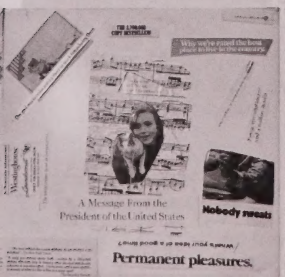
GRETCHEN: It's funny, I was at a Carolee Schneemann retrospective and the posters for Meat Joy... Oh my God, they could totally be our band posters!

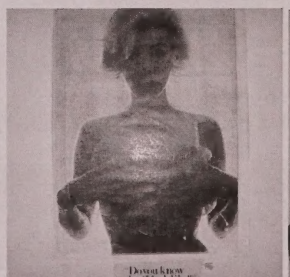
A RADICAL DEMOCRACY

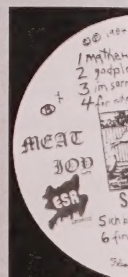
MELLISSA: I had a radically different education. I learned at a very young age that we all had a voice and then I had been in a band where I was very much an employee. And I didn't like how that felt. To me, these are people that I love and respect. And I don't see how anyone is the boss of anybody else. We all have something to add and we can respectfully listen to each other and create together. I never felt like I had this genius, singular vision. I've always been made better by my collaborators.

JOHN: An idea we developed called Song Captain was helpful as well. Every one of the band would basically be in charge of how a song sounded, and in the studio they would be in charge really of the mix and the kind of the final say so. So we divided everything up among the five that way as well.

TIM: And everybody got to put a minute or even more of whatever they wanted on the record. All the little interstitials are personal creations, you know, done jam box-to-jam box or whatever.







ALBUM RE-ISSUE

GRETCHEN: I was chagrined, folks just putting the album up on YouTube. And I get it. If you can't really find it easily for less than 70 bucks... So it would be wonderful for it to be in people's hands again. But this feels like the perfect time, not the least of which, because people have turntables! So it's perfect timing, politically and technologically.

When we went on tour in 1984, we were able to put some gas in the van through selling merchandise. Unless you have a tangible item, you're not going to be putting gas in the van from what you get from streaming. But I think Mr. Spotify put some gas in his van and I'm pretty sure that Apple did. Dave Lowery [(Camper Van Beethoven, Cracker] wrote about about when Spotify first started and it was putting stuff up that it had never licensed. It just said, "We don't know how to license it." And I believe it was an NPR woman who checked it and was like, "Well, I was able to find it in 30 seconds." So it's disingenuous. It reminds me of going to all the trouble of having an Americans with Disabilities Act that says a wheelchair needs to be able to move. And "disruptors" who are - I'm going to say it - always men, put a bunch of scooters there and just are like, "Well, that's how it is." This technology that's been invented isn't really looking out for everybody. That's my rant.

Art can have kindness in it. That's the real revolution. And these interventions from businessmen to make it all more convenient with zeros and ones is fine. But we can disrupt as well. We can also be disruptors.

PLAYING LIVE IN 2023

GRETCHEN: In October, we're going to play live. In front of other people. It was always a terrifying experience. And I don't think 2023 is going to be any less terrifying than it was back in the fucking day!

But we have an in-store at End Of An Ear and we have Cheer Up Charlie's. Back when it was Chances, I saw Moist Fist get married to themselves. I would always feel like Moist Fist was our children. That was our Meat Joy legacy. And it's interesting because who we have opening at Cheer Up Charlie's is Edith Frost from Suffer Jet City.

And then we have the KUTX taping on Friday, October 20th, and then we have Museum of Human Achievement. And who we have opening at MOHA is Kathy McCarty of Buffalo Gals Warehouse. So it feels amazing.

Meat Joy gigs around Austin 2023:

Wed Oct 18 | 4pm
End of an Ear acoustic in-store

Thurs Oct 19
Cheer Up Charlie's

Fri Oct 20
KUTX radio taping

Sat Oct 21
Museum of Human Achievement

WE'LL JUST ROCK FOR OURSELVES

Meg Henges in the recording studio, 1994 [AR.2010.022 (04-42-019)]

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Front cover photos: Mrs. Fun at Chances, 1992 [AR.2010.022 (04-04-001-035)]

This is a scan of the booklet that accompanied "We'll Just Rock For Ourselves" - an exhibit of the photographs of Lisa Davis in 2018. The archive is stored at The Austin History Center.

In the 1970s, the gay liberation movement was gaining momentum across the country, including in Austin, Texas. The 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City brought a spotlight to injustices against LGBTQ communities, and the following decades ushered in a fight for LGBTQ rights and visibility.

The number of out, or openly gay, performers in Austin's local music scene by the 1980s was growing, with nationally recognized punk musicians such as Gary Floyd of the Dicks and Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys. Masculinity was deep-seated within the hardcore punk scene, and few punk musicians were openly gay. Along with the underrepresentation of LGBTQ-identifying musicians, as lesbian singer-songwriter Gretchen Phillips points out, very few rock bands were female-led.

Sincola, Undated [AR.2010.022 (10-07-001)]

The boldness of Floyd and Turner encouraged Phillips to create politically charged and sexually frank music in female-fronted queer bands. The openness about sexuality from a lesbian perspective was arguably the beginning of the Riot Grrrl movement, which gave a platform for feminism in the punk rock scene. Phillips formed multiple lezzie rock bands, including Meat Joy, Two Nice Girls, Girls in the Nose, Lord Douglass Phillips, and The Gretchen Phillips Xperience. Other notable women in the lesbian music community included Darcee Douglass, Terri Lord, Meg Hentges, and Kay Turner, who played in various bands including Power Snatch, Sincola, and Swine King. The genres of these

Darcee Douglass playing with Power Snatch, undated [AR.2010.022 (07-24-018)]

Terri Lord playing with Power Snatch, Undated [AR.2010.022 (07-4-008)]

bands ranged from folk to experimental to funk, but at the core was the punk ethos of nonconformity and individuality.

Sandra Martinez opened Chances in the 1980s, widely remembered as a legendary lesbian bar and punk performance space. Frequented by men, women, straight, and LGBTQ people, Chances became a regular gathering place for benefits and political activism as much as for live music and drinks. While gay and lesbian bars of the 1970s existed in the backs of establishments and hidden from public view, Martinez decided in 1986 to take down coverings from the windows and give greater visibility and openness to the bar as well as to the LGBTQ community who patronized it.

Lisa Davis, a local photographer, was friends with several musicians who frequently played at Chances and other Austin venues, and she documented numerous bands, queer and straight, over her short lifetime. Davis was equally engaged in activism, as many within the music community were, and took part in protests with the Women's Action Coalition and the Lesbian Avengers, organizations which voiced their messages against homophobia and misogyny through demonstrations and performance art.

Left: Lisa Davis and Jana Birchum at the March on Washington, 1993 [AR.2010.022 (07-06-013)]

March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation, 1993 [AR_2010_022 (07-06-035)]

LESBIAN A

We'll Just Rock for Ourselves presents photographs from the **Lisa Davis Photograph Archive** (AR.2011.022) documenting the lesbian musicians and LGBTQ activists of the 1990s. The title is from a Power Snatch song titled "No Thanks (We'll Just Rock For Ourselves)," written in response to the song "Intellectuals Rocking for Women" by the all-male band the Pocket FishRmen.

Kay Turner playing with Girls in the Nose, undated [AR.2010.022 (06-08-001)]

Davis was a prolific photojournalist. Her archive contains over 29,000 images, taken largely between 1978 and 1995. She documented everything from live music to high school sports to the first 100 days of Ann Richards' term as Governor. Her work was published in local and national magazines and newspapers including *Rolling Stone, The New York Times, OUT Magazine,* and *The Austin Chronicle*. After battling major depression, Davis took her life on July 14, 1995, at the age of 32. A memorial service was held for her in Austin at Umlauf Sculpture Gardens, and friends and members of the community gave donations in her memory to Out Youth, an organization founded in 1990 that serves Central Texas LGBTQ youth and their allies.

If you would like to learn more about the amazing work done by OutYouth, point your camera phone at this QR Code...

The book is coming out!!

We are ridiculously excited to announce that the book is being published by UT Press!

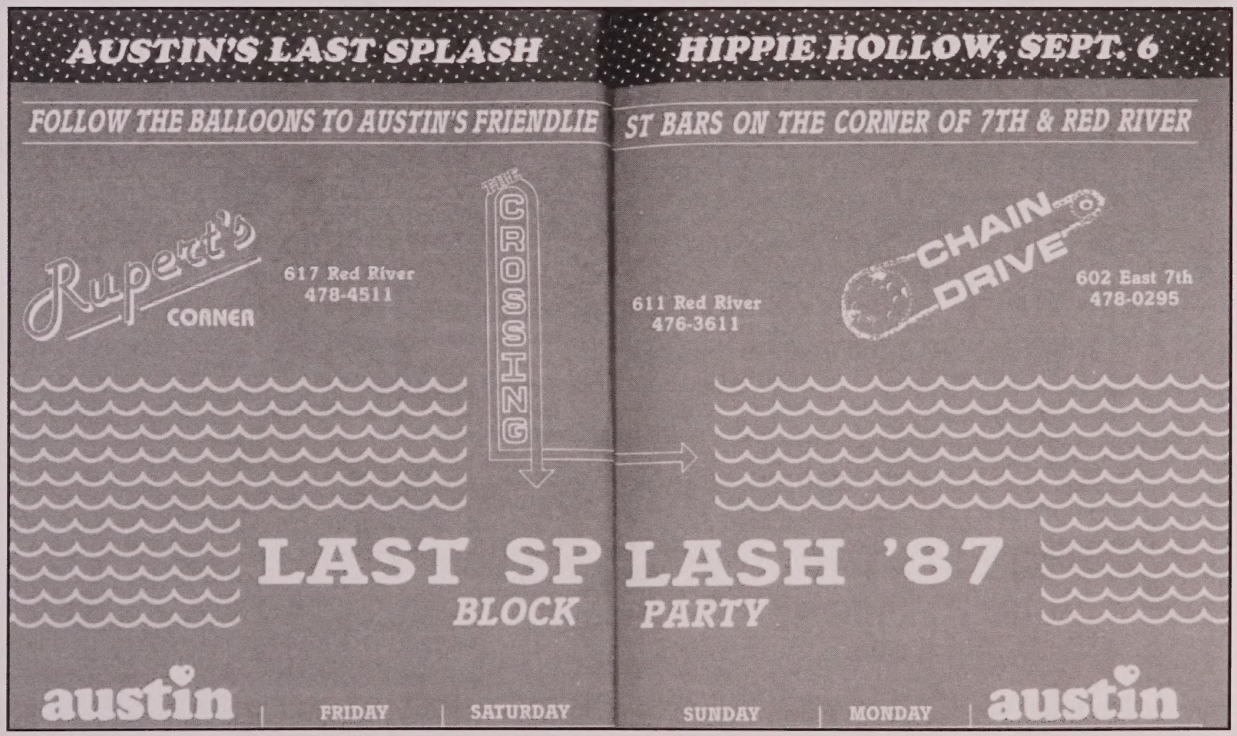
This project started out as a documentary film, thanks to Chepo Peña. We interviewed so many people and got so much ephemera - posters, flyers, zines, hand flyers etc - that it all got really overwhelming.

Then Covid lockdown happened, which gave us time to think.

Why not make a book like ***Please Kill Me***? Take all the interviews and weave them together.
But there was still something missing.

I got in touch with the amazing journalist (and walking music encyclopaedia) Greg Beets. He wrote the history part of each chapter, so you get the best of both worlds; real history of Austin's 90s underground mixed with silly stories about making raw meat masks wayyyy before Lady Gaga (thank you Down Syndrome Army!)

We started out concentrating on Red River. In the late 80s / early 90s, it was pretty desolate. There was an old Zendik Farm compund that became The Cavity. As Jimmy Bradshaw puts it, "Chaos ensued!"

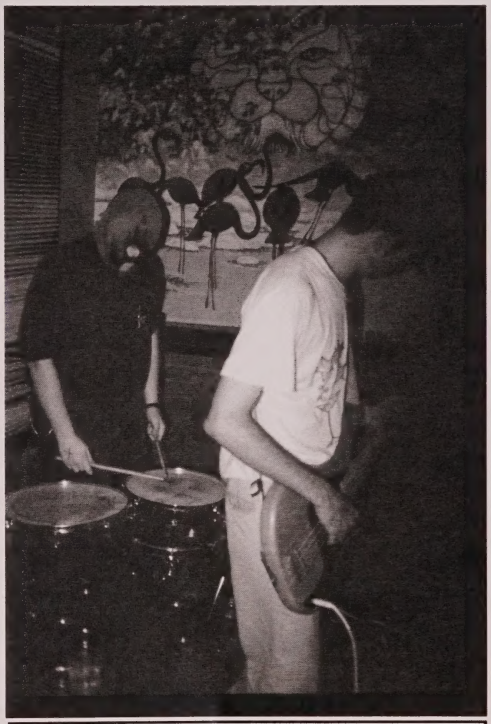


At 7th and Red River was the gay bar Ruperts, or Marilyn's. That became The Blue Flamingo - a cross-dressing bar managed by Miss Laura, who invited the punks to play when The Cavity shut down. Around the same time, Emo's opened on the cornerstone of 6th and Red River. That space is still sitting empty.

Another gay bar (primarily for lesbians) was Chances, at 9th and Red River (see article later in the zine). That was opened by the amazing Sandra Martinez (of Top Drawer fame) and was another of **the** venues for the underground touring or local acts to play. The space is now occupied by Cheer Up Charlie's - one of Austin's best venues.

The Blue Flamingo is now The Chess Club and keeping the DIY spirit alive.

Furry Things first gig was at The Blue Flamingo.



Teen Titans at The Blue Flamingo.

Slightly off the main strip, Liberty Lunch was the big warehouse venue for any touring act that appeared on MTV's ***120 Minutes*** (it is now offices for tech companies). It was at 2nd and Guadalupe.The Electric Lounge was an artistic mix of poetry, movie nights (initially), jazz bands, indie rock and singer-songwriters suchoas Hamell On Trial. It is now a 42-storey condo tower on Bowie Street.

The Hole In The Wall just got saved by a $1.6M grant from the City of Austin's Iconic Venue and Cultural Trust. We all wish they'd had that to preserve Liberty Lunch or The Cavity or Blue Flamingo or Chances. But then we'd be stuck in the past. Good things are still happening.

You can purchase a copy of the book here

"*A Curious Mix of People* digs way deep and miraculously conjures up the feeling of Austin in the early '90s, a place I never thought I'd get to visit again."

—BRITT DANIEL, SPOON

"This lively oral history made me feel like I'd stumbled into a tiny bar filled with all the Austin bands that mattered in the '90s and eavesdropped upon all the wildest gossip that outsiders weren't meant to hear. It's funny, moving, exhaustively reported, and hard to put down."

—MELISSA MAERZ, AUTHOR OF ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT: THE ORAL HISTORY OF DAZED AND CONFUSED

"*A Curious Mix of People* stitches together our collective memories in carefully curated sections; it's as if your favorite zine has graduated to become a DIY dissertation. Greg Beets's meticulous music criticism and Richard Whymark's documentarian insights combine to immortalize the musicians, bands, clubs, managers, producers, engineers, DJs, and others who made 1990s Austin what it was. I was a baby pop-punk riot girl sweetheart and I was coddled and loved by many in Austin. To be reminded again of this community is a blessing."

—REBECCA CANNON, SINCOLA

It's 1990 in Austin, Texas. The next decade will be a tipping point in the city's transformation from sleepy college town to major city. Beneath the increasingly slick exterior, though, a group of like-minded contrarians were reimagining an underground music scene. Embracing a do-it-yourself ethos, record labels emerged to release local music, zines cheered and jeered acts beneath the radar of mainstream media outlets, and loads of small clubs opened simply because music-minded people wanted a place to play.

This vibrant scene valued expression over erudition, from the razor-sharp songcraft of Spoon to the fuzzed-out poptones of Sixteen Deluxe, and blurred the boundaries between observer and participant. Evolving in tandem with the city's emergence on the national stage via the film *Slacker* and the SXSW conference and festivals, Austin's musical underground became a spiritual crucible for the uneasy balance between commercial success and cultural authenticity, a tension that still resonates today.

The first book about Austin underground music in the '90s, *A Curious Mix of People* is an oral history that tells the story of this transformative decade through the eyes of the musicians, writers, DJs, club owners, record-store employees, and other key figures who were there.

GREG BEETS is a music journalist and musician who wrote for the *Austin Chronicle* and performed as a vocalist with the 1990s Austin bands Cheezus, Noodle, and the Peenbeets. RICHARD WHYMARK is a documentary filmmaker and the executive producer of the documentary series *A Curious Mix of People*.

Cover collage © Chepo Peña

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GREG BEETS & RICHARD WHYMARK

A CURIOUS MIX OF PEOPLE

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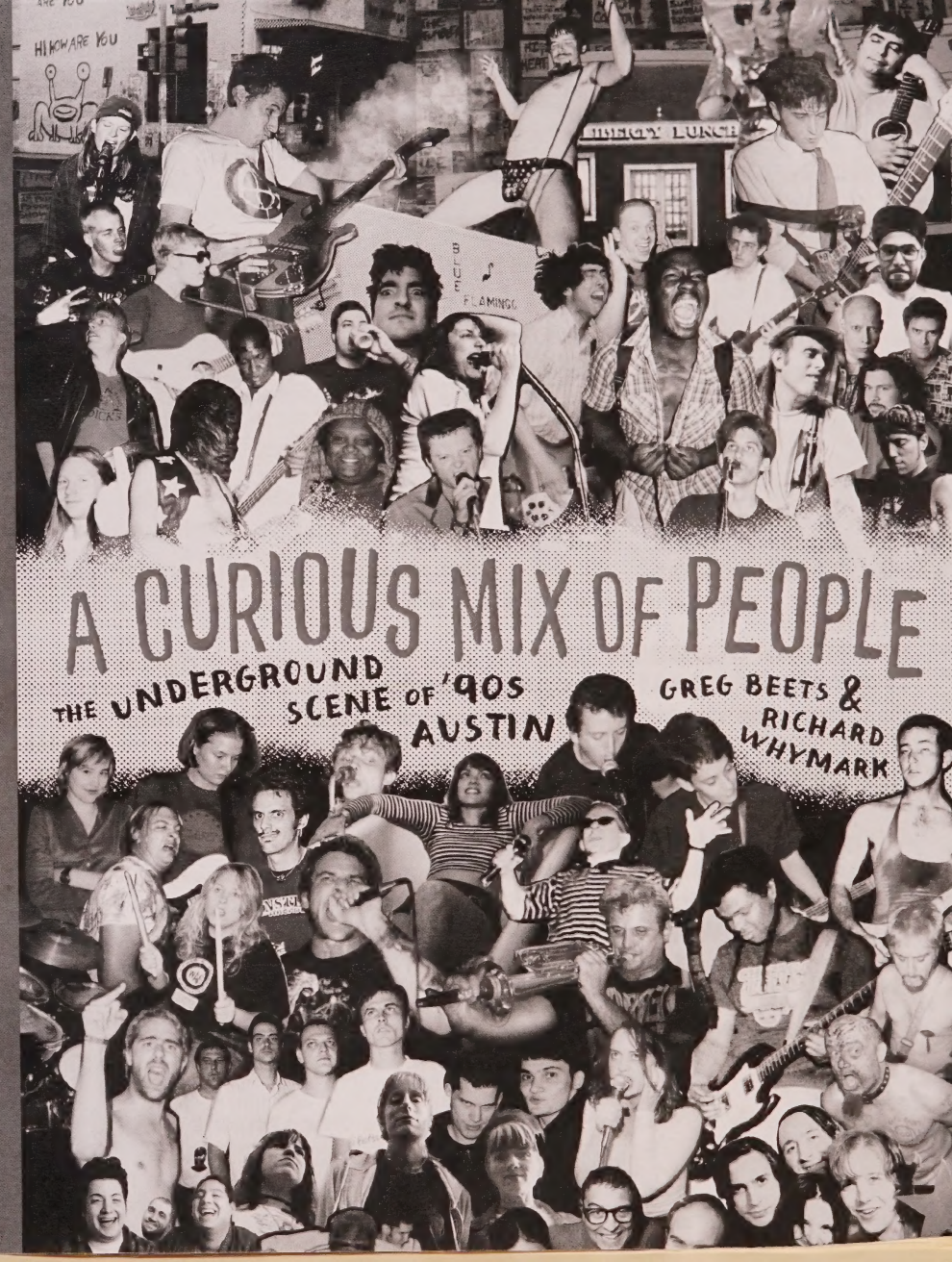
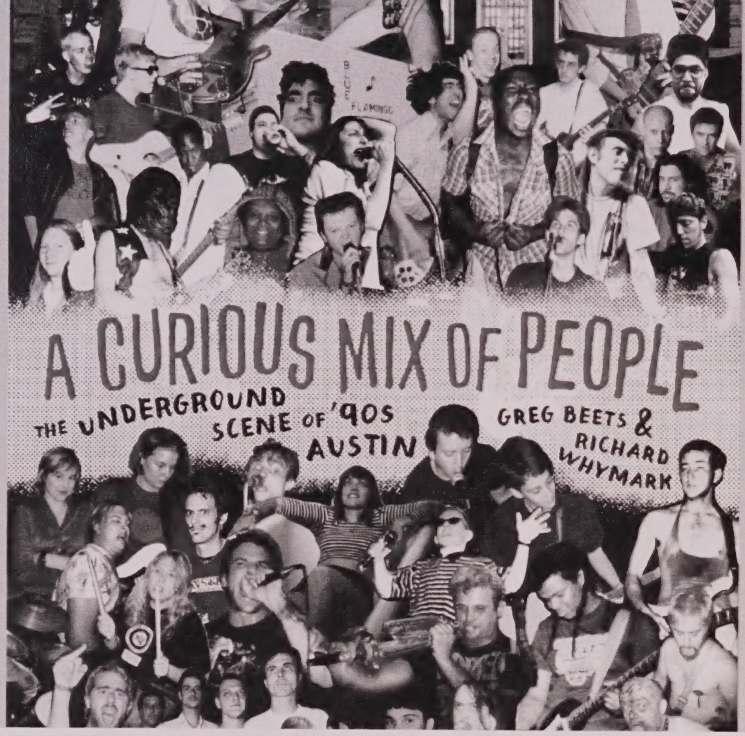




atCentral

Book launch "A Curious Mix of People: The Underground Scene of '90s Austin"

7 p.m. Oct. 21
Austin Central Library
FREE

SATURDAY OCTOBER 28th
THE PARLOR - 4301 Guadalupe St, Austin.
To celebrate the book release, we're putting on a show!!

Here are the tentative times:

4:00pm: Mike Henry (invocation)
4:10pm: Hamell on Trial (acoustic)
4:50pm: The John-Pauls
5:30pm: Yard Work
6:10pm: Jesus Christ Superfly
6:50pm: The Living Pins
7:30pm: Gomez (ATX)
8:10pm: Glorium

Please check the Curious Mix of People Facebook page for details / changes / etc)

Chances

Greg Beets' introduction from the opening of the "Chances" chapter in the book:

Located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Red River and 9th Street from 1982 through 1994, Chances was a lesbian bar that backed into becoming one of Austin's most eclectic live music venues by 1990. Its steadfast refusal to color within genre boundaries meant you could see anyone from a young Lisa Loeb on the brink of a number-one single to day-glo coated industrial bluegrass freaks Caroliner Rainbow from one night to the next.

Seen through the typically squalid prism of underground music club aesthetics, Chances was refreshingly picturesque. Entering the low-ceilinged building from Red River, you would find the bar to the right and a small stage to the left. But when the weather was nice, shows took place on an outdoor patio with a larger stage that backed up to a limestone cliff wall.

Greg Beets: There is a story that Spike Gillespie wrote in the Chronicle sometime after Chances closed. You're quoted as saying that Biscuit and Gary Floyd in particular really helped set the tone for Austin's punk scene being maybe more LGBT friendly than if one may not have had those two strong gay men at the forefront. So I kind of wanted to ask you about that with the passage of time but also maybe get you to elaborate on that a little bit. Was Austin a more gay friendly scene? And, if so, how did that manifest itself?

Gretchen Phillips: Well, my entrée being via these lesbian lovers who were a little older - and definitely had been around longer - were telling me these guys are gay. And then I go to the show and I'm like, "These are the best attended shows going on!" So these guys are gay and everybody loves them. Okay, that's kind of amazing. I came from a town with gay radio shows, gay bookstores. It was a lateral move from Houston. And the thing is - I always thought that all punk was also gay and then I would meet people from other scenes, like this friend of mine, Ria Pell, in Atlanta, and she was like, "Our scene was very macho and it definitely wasn't gay so you were really lucky."

Laura Williams: Chances was just a really special place. The impact it had on the community was big. It started out as this tiny little lesbian bar that became this huge neighborhood club. It was totally fluid. Everyone from every possible walk of life, gender, sexuality.

Terri Lord: I still miss Chances!! It's funny, hardly anyone knows this about Chances - and those that do may have forgotten because it was in the eighties - but the first real rock show there happened because I happened to have played drums with this lez folk trio called "Rhapsody." One of the trio, Jill, was Sandra Martinez's girlfriend and the first couple of years it existed they owned/operated Chances together.

At first there was no outdoor stage. no indoor stage either. It had been a sports bar right before they took it over, so people played in the corner and it sounded fairly terrible in there. If I remember correctly, at first they just had acoustic lady folksinger types.

Terri: The "established" women's bar was a dance club called the Hollywood (located in that building later occupied by the Gingerman pub) and on any given Friday or Saturday, it was pretty typical to cruise around there for a while and then hop over to Chances and see if there were any interesting girls there. And then heading back to the damn disco because there weren't. It was usually pretty dead there.

Gretchen: Chances was the arty dyke bar. You know? I might actually get threatened to be beat up at the Hollywood because I'm doing my Deborah Hay dance and some girl is like, "I hate how you dance," and she kicks me in the head. That's never going to happen at Chances because there's just too many grad students and professors there.

Laura Creedle: I liked playing The Cavity but I felt like Chances was home and that's because, you know, everybody was welcome at Chances, and Sandra was amazing. It was just an "Everybody Is Welcome" kind of situation.

Terri: In 1983 they built the stage in the back and had their first "Red River Music Festival." Sort of Austin's version of a "women's music festival." The lineup was, of course, all female - mostly people who played at Chicago House. The headliner was going to be Rhapsody and they asked myself and this bass player, Lynn Keller, to play their set with them for the festival. I guess they wanted to take it to the next level and have a rhythm section for the big show. They knew me from me hanging out there trying to meet girls! Plus I had had some visibility in the Chronicle as a drummer.

Anyway, flash forward a year or two and I was in a post punk band called "The Mind Splinters." We were part of the noise bands, the underground scene of the time - early early Pocket FishRmen, Crust, Ed Hall, Queen Penis - and, as usual in those days, there were hardly any places to play. Clubs always closed. Familiar story right? I went to Sandra (who'd broken up with and bought out her partner by then) and asked if we could put on a rock show.

They still didn't have music very often because they didn't have a PA. I, on the other hand, DID have a PA so she said Yes. She might have had reservations - it was going to be inside and we were LOUD. After The Mind Splinters and Siddhartha Suns played that rock show, my friend Debbie and I put on a few more shows there ourselves; Ed Hall, Alejandro Escovedo Orchestra are two that come to mind. But it didn't take long for word to spread that there was a place to play and ALL the noisy rock bands were playing there.

Chances finally got their own PA and a dedicated booking person. And then all manner of bands began playing there every night of the week - all genres, all types, genders. Chances never looked back!

Laura Williams: After Hundredth Monkey, I was in a band called Nine Worlds and we played Chances a lot. We played with Two Nice Girls, and that was mostly when they played inside. They hadn't built the stage in the back yet. That's how I first got hooked in with Chances, booking gigs. You came to Chances to hear really good music and come to a really cool bar. It wasn't like, "Oh hey we are going to the lesbian bar!" We are going to Chances because Pocket FishRmen's playing and the Wild Seeds are playing and Stick Figures... Whoever's playing. I mean it would be Friday, Saturday, Sunday, jammed from 10pm to 1am.

We sort of stuck with as much of as a mix as possible. We would do the hoot nights and so then those bands would gather people and they were like, "Man, I want to play here again!" So that opened us up to a lot of stuff. I think those were some of the funnest nights, the hoot nights. We did an Aretha Franklin hoot, a Cher... Madonna of course. Two Nice Girls hosted the Madonna. Nothing was off-limits and everybody had a different idea of what was going to fly. It was always interesting.

Gretchen: My recollection is that Chances became an official SXSW venue and then our secret spot got seen by straight people. My buddies Adam (Sultan) from Poi Dog, Ted (Cho) - whoever it would be - are at Chances and they're like, "What is this club? I fucking love this club! That stage is so nice, it sounds so good." And I'm like, "This is a lezzie bar and now you are invited. Check it out!"

Gretchen hosts the 1993 Punk Prom at Chances. Tim Stegall and Terri Lord are crowned.

Laura Creedle: I do think that Sandra made it a warm place and she was always funny about stuff. I remember her carding me. I was like, "Really, Sandra??" And she was like, "Yep. TABC are gunning for me all the time. So yeah, you better have your ID on you." And there was a little bit of education for me because at that moment she looked at me kind of like, you know, "What do you think the TABC are doing with Chances?" And I'm like, I get you. But to be able to make it such a wonderful place and still be fighting the good fight that was subterranean to me is pretty amazing when I think about it like that.

Rebecca Cannon joins Power Snatch on stage at Chances

Rebecca Cannon: I loved that Sincola was three women and two guys, and I also loved that two of the women were lesbians because I loved it when we would go play at Chances or Electric Lounge and there would be so many girls there. And girlfriends. That was really fun to be a part of that scene and to have a group of people in Austin supporting us. I was really proud of that. And also, I was kind of confused about my sexuality at the time so I would be like, "I'm a lesbian. Oh wait. I'm not." It was just fun to be a part of all of that and I would say that we were all fluid before we knew what fluid was. And we were gender queer. I certainly think I would be gender queer at that time because I'd just identify with both male and female. I was queer as a kid and yet fluid but I didn't have all the language. So I'm glad for the spectrum now. There was a lot of gender fluidity and spectrum stuff going on. Gender Queer without having the words. There was a lot of inclusivity. Guys that were wearing dresses and girls that were bi or identified that way like me. And loads of gay women and girls that would call themselves dykes. Then there was my friend Michael who is gay and lots of other gay guys that would wear makeup. It just seemed normal and I think Austin was very inclusive. Or it was just the people that I hung out with and the scene that we were in which was very inclusive and you could be yourself. All Freaks Are Welcome. You didn't quite know where you fit in, who you were, or what your sexuality was. It's okay. You're Welcome Here. I think the theme that's run through punk rock was inclusivity for the freaks and outcasts. "Okay, they don't want you? We do. You're welcome to come here. We love you."

Terri: I don't mean to sound like I'm taking credit for what Sandra built (because we ALL made that scene) and I imagine it probably would've happened eventually, if not then. There's always someone like me, who just happens to have their fingers in a lot of pies! I was gay and hung out at gay bars but I also happened to be a musician who played in all kinds of bands with all manner of people. A perfect storm ready to happen and I was truly lucky enough to find myself in the middle of it. And I owned a PA.

Mrs Fun photo by Lisa Davis

Gretchen Phillips: The funny thing about Chances is that because it had been there for so long, since '82, I assumed that that was a necessary thing that would never go away. And when it went away, I assumed that that void would be filled by something as good. That was a huge lesson for me because nothing did replace it until Cheer Up Charlies in terms of the vibe, in terms of that deep intelligence regarding Chances and regarding Cheer Up Charlies.

Top Drawer Thrift

TOP DRAWER THRIFT was opened in 1993 by Sandra Martinez to benefit Project Transitions - a local nonprofit that provides hospice care and transitional housing to HIV and AIDS patients struggling with homelessness.

In September 2023, the store is moving to Airport Boulevard at 53rd Street, just south of the Austin Community College Highland Mall campus.

Punk Rock Prom at Chances

Kerthy Fix: Chances technically was a lesbian bar but it was much more than a lesbian bar for a particular population. They would host the Punk Rock Prom and there were always great shows there and your friends were all there.

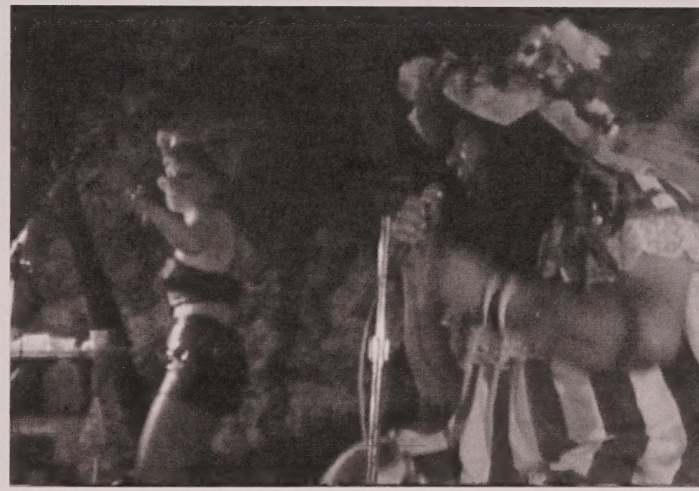
Laura Creedle: The Punk Rock Prom was Terri Lord's idea because - you know - she never got to go to prom. It was not a time that you could be an out lesbian at prom. Terri was just like, "Let's have a prom where you could invite your girlfriend and have the prom you didn't have in high school." So we were like, "Let's have a prom where everybody wears a dress or a tuxedo!" And then it was all a scramble of getting our costumes together and corsages and it was delightful.

Chepo and Henry dance while Gretchen serenades...

We all wore dresses and it was ridiculous and Gretchen emceed. I had this ridiculous pink and orange dress that I found at a thrift store and I put my hair up in sausage curls and I don't even know why I chose to do that but it was a blast. Gretchen got Chepo and my husband Henry to dance and serenaded them and that's one of those memories that I like to go back and I just go, "Aww, it's just the sweetest thing." Yeah. It was just one of those uncomplicated fun moments. And that's another thing about the 90s - we just did fun silly stuff.

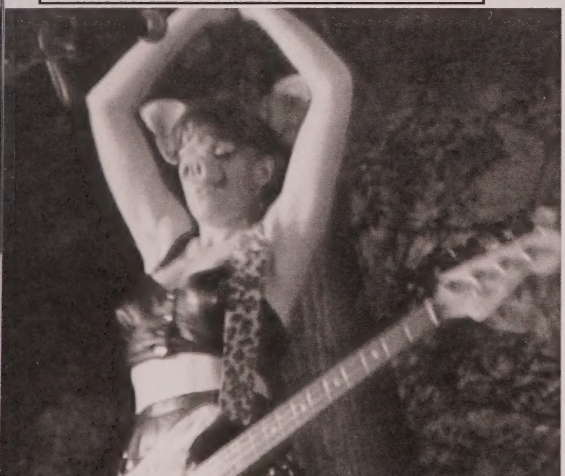
Swine King

Dotty Farrell : There was a performance art piece that was done at Chances outside by Biscuit, Todd Kassens, Alan [Williams] of Shoulders, and Jim Fritzler that was called "In The Hall Of The Swine King". That is how we got our name. One of our first shows was on the outside stage with Snoopy [Melvin] and Rob Cooley both on drums, me and Darcee on basses, Mark [Kenyon] and Skip [Hyatt] on guitars. Randy could hardly stand up for very long at the time, so we found this ridiculous, elaborately carved wooden chair that actually looked like a throne (it weighed about 60 lbs - it was massive) and he sat and sang from it. The theme was Mama Cass, and we all wore mumus stuffed with pillows, and wigs.



Watch Swine King perform at Chances.

I dressed Skip up in an apron with a folded paper hat and an over-the-shoulder concession box full of ham sandwiches, which he handed out to the audience before we started and during the show after playing "Monday, Monday", on cue, we all (audience included) ate and choked together on ham sandwiches. The 90's were a laugh riot!!!



Power Snatch

Laura Creedle: That band was such a talky band. We were always processing. Everybody throwing ideas all at once and when it worked it was majestic. And when it didn't work, it was chaos. But yeah, it was worth it when it worked. I loved that band so much. It was my dream band. Not that Happy Family wasn't, but Power Snatch was the band from the beginning I was just like, "This is the band I'm going to put together!"

The name came from Darcee. She was weightlifting, she was wrestling. Yeah, she was doing it all. Who doesn't love a triple entendre?

Cindy Widner: It's two words, not one. Grammatically, it's a compound noun (maybe). Flipped and reversed, it's a call to arms in the style of Public Enemy: "Snatch the power!" In the early 1990s, it was an all-woman rock band straight out of Austin, Texas, baybee!

Greg Beets: The other thing I remember about Power Snatch is it wasn't just a musical performance - it was really presentation. It was sights and sounds.

Laura Creedle: Yeah. Well geez, you're going to make me cry. I think about how much time we spent with the Lesbian Avengers and Lisa Davis. One of the only recordings of Power Snatch is one of our very first shows. Lisa Davis was wearing a foam tongue, someone else had the vulva and they were just, 'aaah.' I look at the recording and I remember that night because Lisa was around me and stepping on all my boxes and just knocking into me and I was just trying my best to try and make it through the songs. It was a crazy thing.

Lisa Davis joins Power Snatch on stage

Lisa taught me how to breathe fire. That's something to share with your children, right? Yeah so, I'm going to miss her so much. Yeah. She was an amazing person and yeah, she was definitely one of the big reasons that we were always just kind of crazy chaos on a stick.

Lisa Davis joins Power Snatch on stage

Cindy Widner: The inclusiveness of Austin's underground is sometimes noted by people who note such things. "Inclusive" is a funny word, though - it implies that there is some central group to be excluded from. In this case, that group is assumed to be composed of young, white, cis, straight men. But the thing is, that's not the group that formed the core of what I guess I'll call "outlier" music - though some of it was very popular - in Austin. Queer folkx like Biscuit and Gary Floyd and Gretchen Phillips and Dotty Farrell and Meg Hentges and Teresa Nervosa/Taylor and Terri Lord and Darcee Douglas weren't "included" in the scene; they were the core of the scene. LGBTQI people, cis/straight women and, to a lesser extent, BIPOC musicians and performers (because Austin, because Texas, because because) were the rule, not the exception.

Representation was important, but it was also just a fact that we were (and are) powerful, grown-ass women. We'd all been in bands before, and Terri and Darcee were already legends by then. Plus, there were tons of other all-woman bands largely unrelated to riot grrrl all over by then: L7 and Babes in Toyland, Seven Year Bitch and Lunachicks, my faves Calamity Jane and Frightwig. It was a thing we were doing then. The same was true in Austin, of course, as always. Women were integral members of great and beloved bands from the Inhalants to Sincola to Stretford to the Cryin' Out Louds to Swine King to Sixteen Deluxe. It truly was a wild and fantastic mix of styles and people, as the name of this project makes clear, and, equally important, clubs that took chances including, first and foremost, Chances.

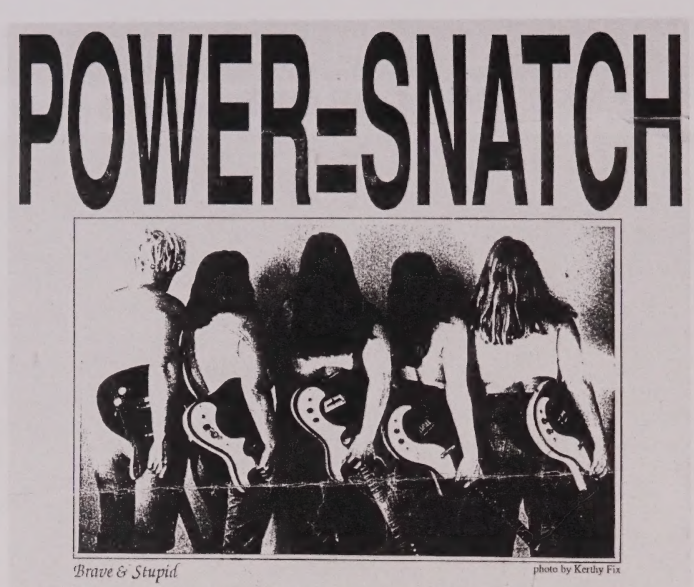

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photo by Kerthy Fix
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Call the Power Snatch HOTLINE 867-6214 for upcoming gig info.

Laura Creedle: I remember Alton, a Cher impersonator. We agreed to back up Alton and do Cher cover songs. And Terri was Greg Allman so we were all assigned boyfriends and I remember seeing people gluing pubic hair to their faces.

That band was chaos.

Just everything that we could do, we did. You got to have chaotic moments in your life, and that was mine.

But I quit on a whim and I regret that. I'm impulsive. I was seven months pregnant and I was hormonally insane.

My mom was in the hospital and my dad had just died. And I was in the second hour of the band meeting I just said, "I'm done with this," and I regretted it instantly, but there was no going back. And that was a sore spot for a very long time.

And that persisted until Girls Rock Camp, and Cindy [Widner] was a big part of that. She asked me if I wanted to teach guitar. Terri was equipment manager and my daughter Blair did the camp and played bass and I'm like, "Do you want to rock?"

And she was like, "No, I want to manage equipment." So she interned with Terri for years. And it was just a very nice passing of the torch. I regretted leaving Power Snatch so it was a nice full circle that I left when I was pregnant with Blair, and then when she was an adult to come back with her in tow to Girls Rock Camp.

Girls Rock Austin

Our last show was at Emo's, which we had never played. It was a great show. And there was a bunch of people that had never seen us before who were like, "You guys are great! Where do you play next?" And I'm like, "Well, never." So it was always a matter of timing, I guess. But there you go.

Olive / Garnet

GREG BEETS: After Power Snatch broke up, you got into Olive/Garnet...

LAURA CREEDLE: Yeah. It's funny. Kerthy was around Power Snatch and did a lot of filming. [Editor's note - most of the video stills in this zine are from videos made by Kerthy.] Kerthy went, "Well I have a band. Would you like to come play?" And I was like, "Sure!" She borrowed Terri's practice space. There was another guitarist and a drummer and a bass player. None of us knew each other and she was like, "Okay here we are!" And she was just like, "Do what you're going to do." That was a very Kerthy way of putting a band together, but it worked.

It was fun. Michele Waterman was the guitarist and she was the person who basically made that sound. She had an effect-a-tron which - to this day - I'm still in awe. It was this amazing box of tape loops and she would clean it meticulously. I would have broken that. Anything that I couldn't stomp on and put back I was just like, "That is not for me." But she made these shimmery watery sounds and it was such a departure from Power Snatch.

It was a completely different scene. Very much informed by Kerthy's performance art aesthetic.

I ended up with more weird paint and goo on equipment during the early days of Garnet, just because there was always some sort of performance art thing going on. I remember going to see Kerthy at a performance art show and she was wearing this sort of robot stilt suit and then she was giving a monologue that she started going, "Shit, shit!" And I'm like, whoa this got abrupt. And she was actually in this stilt suit on top of spaghetti that someone had thrown on stage, sliding, and she wanted people in the audience to catch her and we were all just like, "Yes, this is intense!"

GREG: A true Renaissance performer.

Olive

Courtney Cater	*bass*
Laura Creedle	*guitar*
Kerthy Fix	*vocals*
Jennie Trower	*drums*
Michele Waterman	*guitar*

songs

Colleen Reed	*Olive*
Tiny Lamps	*music- Clay Daniel*
Hole in My Head	*d.g.*
Bitter Medicine	*Olive*

16 track recording

Joel Crutcher thanks guy

Art

d.g. thanks girl

Contacts

Laura	448-3617
Kerthy	480-9644

Thanks to: Adam & Henry

KERTHY FIX: For me as an artist, to be in a community where I could start a band and get shows and really be part of the community as a performer meant a lot. And I mean that's the thing that I think maybe doesn't translate now, is that your band were your best friends.

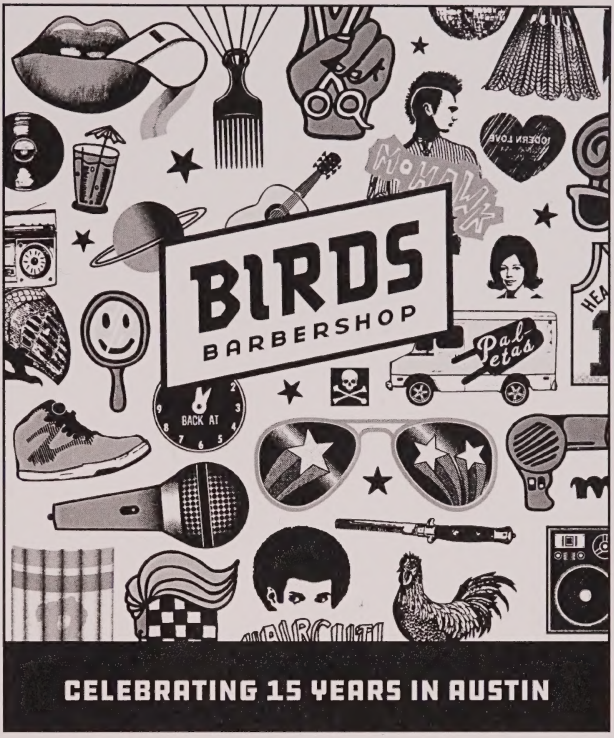
LAURA: We made this beautiful tape and Gretchen produced it at Willie Nelson's studio. It was just lovely. There's parts of it that sounds like early Beach Boys. Kerthy put just an amazing amount of work into that.

KERTHY FIX: It was a great experience and we never released it. I still have it and it actually holds up pretty well. It holds up pretty well because Laura and Michele Waterman were really amazing. They had a really guitar kismet. And Courtney Cater is an amazing bassist. Jim Almo the drummer, was this kind of young, hyper little super enthusiastic little guy and I actually ran into him in; he's in Providence, Rhode Island. I went into an amazing bakery coffee shop and he's the manager there and has kids and went to college.

LAURA: The songs were interspliced with Kerthy playing accordiàn in a Polish subway station. It's really beautiful and I don't know why she doesn't want that out there. But she's never wanted to release it, so...

KERTHY: I don't know, it was just fun. You had your little gang and you got to be a part of the bigger gang by playing. Yeah it was good times. You got to be half naked on stage in bondage wear. Where else would we get to do that?

Kerthy in a still from Olive's music video for "Smile"



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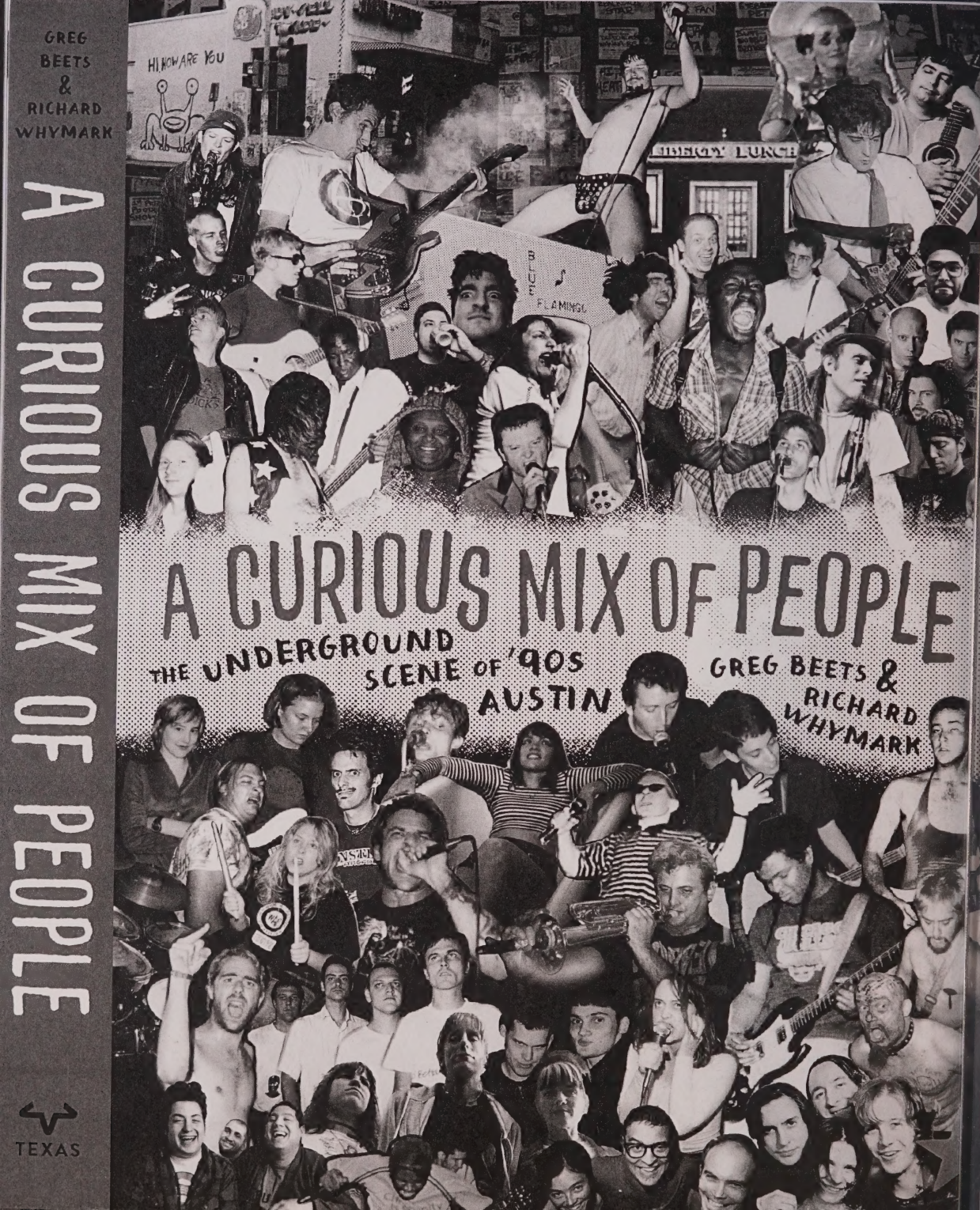
GREG BEETS & RICHARD WHYMARK
A CURIOUS MIX OF PEOPLE
HI HOW ARE YOU
LIBERTY LUNCH
A CURIOUS MIX OF PEOPLE
THE UNDERGROUND SCENE OF '90s AUSTIN
GREG BEETS & RICHARD WHYMARK
TEXAS